

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Support for each amended claim is found, for example, at the corresponding previously presented claim.

No new matter is added.

The indefiniteness rejection of Claims 9 and 12 is traversed. Claim 9 is amended to replace the term “possibly” with “optionally.” Claim 12 is amended to remove the term “its.” Withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection is requested.

The anticipation rejection of Claims 7-8 as being unpatentable in view of Tagaki is traversed.

Claim 7 is drawn to an agent for improving the activation of optical brightness, comprising a water-soluble copolymer having at least one alkoxy or hydroxy polyalkylene glycol function grafted onto at least one ethylenically unsaturated monomer. Thus, present Claim 7 is an agent for improving the activation of optical brightness (e.g., “optical brighteners”) in, for example, paper coating formulations. (See specification page 2, lines 4-7).

In contrast, Tagaki’s copolymer is employed, for example, as a detergent “builder” (see page 2, line 39, of Tagaki) which may, for example, reduce decomposition of a peroxide bleaching agent.

Tagaki does not describe or suggest the “agent for improving the activation of optical brightness” feature of present Claims 7 and 8. Applicants note that in the manufacture of paper, a “bleaching” effect is very different from a “brightening” effect. For example, a “bleaching” effect occurs during the processing of the pulp. Bleaching of wood pulp is the chemical processing carried out on various types of wood pulp to decrease the color of the pulp, so that it becomes whiter. “Bleaching agents” are thus used, for example, to de-color pulp, with the most famous bleaching agent being hydrogen peroxide.

In contrast, a “brightening agent” refers to, for example, the manufacture of a coating to be applied, for example, onto the surface of a paper sheet. Optical brighteners and optical brightening agents (OBAs) are, for example, dyes that absorb light, for example, in the ultraviolet and violet region (usually 340-370 nm) of the electromagnetic spectrum, and re-emit light in the blue region (typically 420-470 nm). Fluorescent activity is a short term or rapid emission response, unlike phosphorescence, which is a delayed emission. These additives are often used to enhance the appearance of color of fabric and paper, causing a perceived "whitening" effect, making materials look less yellow by increasing the overall amount of blue light reflected. As described, *supra*, present Claim 7 is drawn to an agent for improving the activation of optical brightness. Tagaki does not describe or suggest this feature of present Claims 7 and 8. Moreover, Tagaki focuses on molecules that differ from OBAs as used in paper coating formulations. Further, there is no data nor tests supporting the use of the copolymer according to Tagaki, in combination with OBAs, to enhance the optical brightness of such compounds. Accordingly, Tagaki does not describe or suggest all of the features of present Claims 7 and 8. Withdrawal of the anticipation rejection is requested.

The objection to Claims 9-12 for depending upon a rejected base claim is traversed. Claims 9-12 depend from Claim 7. For the reasons described, *supra*, the anticipation rejection of Claim 7 is believed to be overcome. Accordingly, Applicants submit Claims 9-12 no longer depend from a rejected base claim. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Rejoinder of the withdrawn claims is requested under M.P.E.P. § 821.04.

Applicants submit the present application is now in condition for allowance. Early notification to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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